

REMARKS

Claim 8 is amended herein to correct a typographical error. In addition, claims 5-7 and 11 are cancelled without prejudice, and new claims 37-49 are added. Thus, claims 8 and 37-49 are pending.

Claim 37 recites a process for the preparation of multiple cross-linked hyaluronic acid (HA), which process comprises covalently cross-linking HA via two or more different functional groups, wherein the cross-linking is effected by contacting HA with one or more chemical cross-linking agents so as to form two or more different types of functional bonds between HA molecules, wherein the two or more different types of functional bonds are selected from the group consisting of ether, sulfone, amine, imino, and amide bonds. Claim 40 recites a process for the preparation of multiple cross-linked hyaluronic acid (HA), which process comprises covalently cross-linking HA via two or more different functional groups, wherein the cross-linking is effected by contacting HA with one or more chemical cross-linking agents so as to form two or more different types of functional bonds between HA molecules, wherein the two or more different types of functional bonds are selected from the group consisting of ester, sulfone, amine, imino, and amide bonds. Claims 38, 39, 41, and 42 depend from claims 37 and 40, and recite particular functional bonds and cross-linking agents. Support for claims 37-42 can be found in previous claims 5-7, for example.

Claim 43 recites a process for the preparation of multiple cross-linked hyaluronic acid (HA), which process comprises covalently cross-linking HA via two or more different functional groups, wherein the cross-linking is effected by contacting HA with one or more chemical cross-linking agents so as to form two or more different types of functional bonds between HA molecules, wherein the two or more different types of functional bonds are selected from the group consisting of ether, ester, sulfone, amine, imino, and amide bonds, and wherein the process comprises contacting the HA with a first cross-linking agent so as to form a first type of functional bond, and contacting the HA with a further amount of the first cross-linking agent or with a second cross-linking agent so as to form a second type of functional bond. Claims 44 to 49 depend from claim 43, and recite particular cross-linking conditions and cross-linking agents. Support for claims 43-49 can be found throughout Applicant's specification. *See*, for example,

page 7, lines 6-18, which disclose that after a first cross-linking reaction is carried out, a further cross-linking agent can be added to the reaction to effect a second cross-link, and that the further cross-linking agent can be the same or different from the first. *See*, also, page 4, line 27 to page 5, line 1, which disclose that the cross-linking of each type of functional bond can be effected simultaneously or sequentially. Thus, no new matter has been added.

In light of these amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 8 and 37-49.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 5, 6, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,963,666 (the '666 patent). Claims 5, 6, and 11 are cancelled herein without prejudice. Thus, this rejection is moot.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the '666 patent as applied to claims 5-6 and 11 above. Claim 7 is cancelled herein without prejudice. Thus, this rejection is moot.

Allowable claim

Applicant acknowledges the allowability of claim 8.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that claims 8 and 37-49 are in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned agent if such would further prosecution.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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